
CENTRAL REGION COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE SERVICES
Monthly Meeting
Thursday, March 27, 2003
12:45 p.m.

Presiding: Jane Reister Conard, Chair

Present: Edward Armour, Allan Ayoub, Charles Daud, Greg Diven, Norman Fitzgerald, Kathleen Gage, Stephen Goodrich, Bo Hall, Elizabeth Heath, Todd Henriksen, John Hill, Douglas Johnston, Brad Maughan, Karen Silver, Russ Thelin, Dean Walker, Megan Weisen, Councilman David Wilde and Julie Zimmerman.

Excused: Susan Archibeque, Cynthia Brothers, Jan Cook, Brent Goodfellow, Paul Jackson, Stephen Ronnenkamp, Kerry Steadman and Commissioner Gene D. White.

Absent: Deirdre Darby-Duffin and Richard Justice.

Guests/Volunteers: Edie Fauver and Akilah Messado.

Staff: Kim Auberger, Bill Bridge, Jane Gardner, Monteen Gordon, Diane Lovell, Melissa Olsen, James Robson, Curt Stewart and Verene Froisland.

Call to Order & Announcements

Ms. Jane Reister Conard called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. and welcomed all those in attendance. Ms. Conard then asked Kathleen Gage to report on the Giant Steps Award luncheon that was held on Wednesday, March 26th at the Marriott.

Ms. Gage stated the Giant Steps Award luncheon was a great event. that it was a good networking opportunity for the Council and DWS, and that it was well worth the sponsorship.

Ms. Conard then welcomed new member Todd Henriksen, of EnviroCare to the Council.

Ms. Conard thanked Jan Cook for chairing the February Council meeting in her absence.

Ms. Conard then welcomed Monteen Gordon, Director of State Council Affairs and Veterans Services.

Ms. Gordon stated that she was happy to be at the Council meeting and that she plans to visit all of the regions over the next several months.

Ms. Conard also welcomed Bill Bridge, Manager of the Metro Employment Center.

Ms. Conard then announced that the State Council Meeting would be held on Thursday, April 17th in Salt Lake City. She noted that an email reminder would be sent to all members and encouraged Council members to attend.

Chairperson Conard made a special presentation to honor Kathleen Gage and to thank her for all of her contributions. Ms. Conard noted that Ms. Gage has facilitated the Council's Retreat for

the last three years and is busy helping again this year. She has served as Council Vice-Chair and as Chair of the Marketing Committee and was presented a plaque by Ms. Conard in appreciation and in recognition of her service.

Ms. Gage stated that "it has truly been a pleasure to serve the Council" and she looks forward to her continued involvement.

Approval of Minutes

Norman Fitzgerald moved to approve the Central Region Council Meeting minutes of Thursday, February 27, 2003. Charles Daud seconded the motion. All voted "Aye". The motion passed.

Mr. Fitzgerald moved to approve the Executive Committee Meeting minutes of Thursday, March 13, 2003. Stephen Goodrich seconded the motion. All voted "Aye". The motion passed.

Committee Reports

Membership – Ms. Conard stated that there is currently a public employee vacancy on the Council and that letters have been sent out requesting nominees to the three public employee associations, which are UPEA, UPA and Utah Alliance of Government Employees (UAGE). Ms. Conard then noted that Councilman Wilde referred the president of UAGE and that a selection will be made soon. Ms. Conard continued by stating that there are also two remaining private sector vacancies – one for a large business and one for a small business. She stated that Mr. James Robson, DWS Senior Economist, was asked to analyze the Council's current representation and recommend gaps or areas where the Council needs better representation. He will share his recommendations during his presentation to the Council later on the agenda.

Basic Needs – Karen Silver spoke concerning the Basic Needs Committee's 1000-Day Plan activities. She stated that after members of the Basic Needs Committee visited two Employment Centers last October, five recommendations were made. Ms. Silver then stated that the Basic Needs Committee would be pursuing those recommendations to see what can be done not only by the Committee but also by the Council as well.

Ms. Silver continued by stating that Greg Diven brought a newspaper article to her attention about Salt Lake Community College potentially closing its Skill Center in Tooele. The Basic Needs Committee is very concerned about that and feels that in accordance with the 1000-Day Plan, the Council is to assure that there is a skilled and well-educated workforce. Ms. Silver then suggested that the Council follow-up on the possible closure of the Tooele Skill Center and look into other options to keep it from closing. Ms. Silver then noted that the Basic Needs Committee is concerned about keeping that service in Tooele because Tooele has the highest unemployment rate in the State.

Ms. Conard agreed that the Council should follow-up on the possible closure of the Tooele Skills Center. Ms. Conard stated that the issue will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting. Ms. Conard then requested that DWS staff gather some statistics in terms of who uses the space and the reasons that Salt Lake Community College is thinking of closing the Skills Center. Ms. Conard then asked Mr. Fitzgerald, through the Facilities Committee, to consider the possibility/feasibility of co-locating the Skills Center at the Tooele Employment Center in the future.

Mr. Fitzgerald requested that State Representative and Council member Brent Goodfellow speak to the Executive Committee because he works for the Salt Lake Community College and could provide information relative to the Skills Center.

Government Relations – Mr. Goodrich stated that there is now specific language in the House regarding the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Reauthorization. Mr. Goodrich then stated that he would look into the language and then report back at the next Council meeting.

Marketing – Ed Armour stated that a large part of the Marketing Committee Meeting, which met jointly with the Training & Development Committee, was devoted to discussing fiscal responsibility issues and possible procedural changes associated with the Supervising Today's Workforce (STW) Program. Mr. Armour then stated that the Employer Summit was also discussed and he will provide more information about it at the next Council Meeting. He concluded by stating that the Committee also reviewed its role in the 1000-Day Plan.

Finance – Mr. Daud distributed two handouts that defined "Dislocated Workers" under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and a pie chart reflecting expenditures and obligations under the dislocated worker training fund category. Mr. Daud then stated that it is his understanding that the funding will be ending on June 30, 2003 and by that time the available money should either be spent or obligated.

In the event the monies are not spent by June 30th, Mr. Daud asked the Council to entertain some ideas and consider suggestions as to how these funds could or should be spent in the future.

Ms. Conard stated that one of the charges of the Finance Committee under the 1,000-Day Plan was to review how the Department is using the funds available and if the funds are getting to the people who need it. So, over the course of the next few Meetings, Mr. Daud is going to be looking at the different funding sources and how the funds are being applied. Ms. Conard then asked Mr. Goodrich if he had any information concerning states that have not used their full allocation of WIA funds and whether or not the funds were "rolled over."

Mr. Goodrich responded that he could look into the matter and report back to the Council regarding states that were under-expended at year-end.

Ms. Conard asked Ms. Gardner to explain the difference between expenditures and obligations as reflected on the handout.

Ms. Gardner responded by stating that the 31% of obligated funds are funds that have been allocated to individual customers. The expenditures of 17% are funds that have actually been paid out to training vendors.

Ms. Conard stated that it was her understanding that in 2001 and 2002 all of the WIA funds had been obligated and expended but that all WIA funds have not been obligated or expended for this year.

Mr. Allan Ayoub spoke concerning the Statewide WIA funds and stated that it was his understanding that, for the past three years, the State has not totally obligated all of their training money.

Ms. Gardner stated that it has been her understanding that for 2001 and 2002 Central Region expended its WIA training allocation before year end.

Mr. Maughan stated that the eligibility criteria have tightened because the department has failed the State audit three times in a row. WIA eligibility criteria can make obligating WIA funds more difficult.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked what the reasons were for the audit failure?

Mr. Maughan responded by stating that the audit issues related to the improper justification in the eligibility process. Another situation causing under-obligation is that the department focused on TANF training early in the year rather than WIA training. The eligibility criteria for TANF training can be more flexible than WIA criteria.

Mr. Ayoub stated that he gets the impression that the State Auditor's Office is not as aware and informed as they should be relative to eligibility criteria in this particular program.

Mr. Maughan stated that he feels that may have contributed. The department has been in a three-year debate with the Auditors. He further indicated that it finally came to the point where the Feds were going to become involved.

Ms. Conard asked if the State Auditor's Office was doing the audit on behalf of the Feds?

Mr. Maughan responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Conard asked if the audit criteria were federally identified?

Mr. Maughan responded by stating that there are federal criteria and there are some state modifications.

Ms. Conard stated that on behalf of the Council, she would be interested in finding out more about the audit failure for information purposes.

Mr. Maughan stated that he could have one of the department's in-house auditors come to a future Council meeting to talk about it.

Ms. Conard stated that, unless she hears any objections, the Council would invite an auditor to a future meeting to further discuss the audit with two objectives in mind. The first objective is to understand what the issues are and the second objective is to see if we can do anything about it. There were no objections.

Mr. Maughan then referred back to the WIA Dislocated Worker funds and stated that he feels that most of the funding will be obligated by the end of the year.

Mr. Ayoub stated that perhaps the Council should look into how many training dollars from all sources have been spent in the Tooele Skills Center to determine whether or not we really do have a cause for raising questions.

Ms. Conard stated that it would be a good idea to have a report, as part of our investigation of the Tooele Skills Center, at our next Executive Committee meeting that would include data for all of the training programs.

Mr. Maughan noted that he would share the training programs data as part of his Mid-Year Performance Report later in the meeting.

Training & Development – Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the Training & Development Committee met with the Marketing Committee to discuss the Supervising Today's Workforce (STW) Program. After examining and discussing various aspects of the program, it was determined that program cancellation may be in order, subject to a review of information that Mr. Maughan will compile regarding the STW Budget. Mr. Fitzgerald then stated that he would be reviewing past minutes to determine the initial goals and purpose of the STW Program and if there are other funding considerations that have not been discussed.

Facilities – Mr. Fitzgerald stated that a meeting was held earlier in the month to discuss the Tooele Employment Center and its current lease. Another Facilities meeting will be held prior to the next Executive Committee meeting to review a DWS Facility Checklist, which lists the steps necessary to remodel, relocate or build a facility. Mr. Fitzgerald concluded by stating that it is his hope that he will be in a position to present a recommendation regarding the Tooele facility to the Council at the next meeting.

Youth Council Report and Action Items for Ratification

A. Salt Lake County Youth Leadership Development Project Concept

Bo Hall stated that the State Youth Council has identified \$2,000 per region and is asking for developmental proposals from each of the youth providers. This is something that has happened very quickly and each region in the State needs to respond to Jane Broadhead by the end of April. Mr. Hall then stated that Salt Lake County's idea is to partner with a community agency called The Road Home that provides transitional housing for homeless families. They would like to use youth to assist in the to clean up and refurbishing of some of the housing units. The County is working on a concept paper, but due to the April 30 deadline, the Youth Council is requesting the Regional Council's concurrence and endorsement of the proposed concept.

Mr. Hall moved the Central Region Council concur with the unanimous recommendation of the Youth Council and approve the Salt Lake County/YES Youth Leadership Project Concept. Mr. Armour seconded the motion. All voted "Aye". The motion passed.

B. Contract Extension – Salt Lake Co. Youth EmployAbility Services (YES) Program

Mr. Hall stated that Mr. Clay Hiatt presented a monitoring and evaluation overview of the County YES Program to the Youth Council. Mr. Hall then stated that the Department's recommendation was to renew the contract for an additional year, which was supported unanimously by the Youth Council. Mr. Hall continued by stating that there may be some significant changes in terms of proposed legislation wherein future WIA youth services may be limited to out of school youth only. Currently, about 70% of the County's program involves in-school youth.

Mr. Hall moved the Central Region Council support the unanimous recommendation of the Youth Council to extend Salt Lake County's Youth EmployAbility Services (YES) Program Contract for another year. Mr. Russ Thelin seconded the motion.

Mr. Ayoub asked if the proposal would come from this fiscal year money or money that would occur after the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act?

Mr. Hall stated that he did not know the answer to that and asked Ms. Gardner to respond.

Ms. Gardner stated that she too did not know the answer; however, a new WIA youth services RFP will be required in the spring of 2004.

Mr. Ayoub stated that in the event that WIA is reauthorized as currently proposed, Central Region will need a contingency plan in order to serve out-of-school youth exclusively.

Ms. Gardner related that the County understands that major program changes are under consideration and they are willing to work with the Department to change their current program if necessary.

Mr. Ayoub stated that WIA reauthorization language includes a provision that eliminates Youth Councils.

Mr. Hall stated that it always worries him when he hears language like that because, "The first thing that is done is to eliminate or make them optional and the second thing that is done is eliminate the funding." Mr. Hall then stated that Central Region has had a rich and strong history of outstanding youth programs and he is worried about a National policy that starts a movement that begins to reduce commitments to youth.

Mr. Ayoub stated that he does not support the elimination of Youth Councils; he is just saying that is what he has read.

Ms. Conard asked Mr. Hall and Mr. Goodrich to get together with Ms. Sarah Brenna to find out how we could make our views known to the extent that we would have some influence.

Mr. Fitzgerald made a motion that the Central Region Council support a Legislative response and send a letter to the State Council outlining Central Region's position – that youth in school funding and Youth Council requirements be retained in the new WIA legislation. Mr. Thelin seconded the motion.

Ms. Silver stated that the Council members could also individually contact our Senators and let them know the history of what's been going on in our Region and how devastating it would be. Ms. Silver then stated that there is a statewide group that CAP is a part of that's called the Utah Reauthorization Project. Information about the Utah Reauthorization Project can be accessed from the CAP website at www.slcap.org.

Mr. Hall asked if the Utah Reauthorization Project has taken a position on youth support?

Ms. Silver responded by stating that there was a meeting earlier this week where the issue of in-school vs. out-of-school youth services was discussed. The consensus of the group was that it would be very foolish to wait until students have dropped out of school and would then need more intensive services than to try to help them when they are still in school.

Ms. Conard called for the question on Mr. Fitzgerald's motion. All voted "Aye". The motion passed. Ms. Conard then asked for Diane Lovell's assistance in preparing such a letter. Ms. Conard then asked Ms. Monteen Gordon to see if this issue could be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next State Council meeting.

Ms. Gordon stated that she could bring it up under the “Other Business” category. Ms. Gordon then stated that if this actually comes to pass where they take away the ability to work with youth unless they drop out of the system, they are also taking away the education system that has been a great partner – that would be a big mistake.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked if it would be appropriate to assure that our delegation receives a copy of our letter to the State and, if not, how about providing a copy of the letter to members of the Central Region Council so that they can use it to send a letter to their representative.

Ms. Conard stated that it is her understanding that we need to have approval from the Executive Office before we send letters directly to our representatives if they are to be from the Council. So, if Sarah does not use the letter, then we as individual citizens could send the letter. At that point, the letter will be e-mailed to the Council members.

Ms. Conard stated that she would view Mr. Fitzgerald’s suggestion, to make the letter available to the Council for their individual use, as a motion made by Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Ayoub. Ms. Silver seconded the motion. All voted “Aye”. The motion passed.

Ms. Conard then called for the vote on the original motion made by Mr. Hall and seconded by Mr. Thelin for the one-year contract extension. All voted “Aye”. The motion passed.

April 24th Retreat Planning Committee Report

Ms. Gage stated that the retreat will be held at the new Salt Lake City Public Library from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A continental breakfast will be served in the morning and later there will be a catered lunch as well as a tour of the facility. Ms. Gage then mentioned that some of the highlights include: 1) a discussion on how to get the most out of your Council membership, 2) Mr. Maughan will be doing a presentation on the framework of DWS so that there is clear understanding of how the Council fits in with DWS, 3) Darin Brush will be giving a report on workforce development and the 2003 Summit, and, 4) Mr. Jeff Thredgold, a leading economic futurist, will be giving a full report on the US/Utah economic forecast. Each Committee Chair will give a 3-5 minute report on what their committee has accomplished in the last year based on the goals that were set at last year’s retreat and then there will be breakout sessions to set goals for the coming year. The retreat will end with a short Council meeting beginning at about 4:30 p.m. Ms. Gage continued by stating that more information regarding parking and final details will be sent via e-mail. Ms. Gage then thanked Ms. Lovell for all of her help in bringing the retreat together.

LMI – Utah’s Economic Outlook

Mr. James Robson stated that he would need to be brief due to other meeting commitments. He then stated that he would discuss the unemployment rate, the Occupational Outlook projections and identify the additional areas of membership that the Council should consider.

Mr. Robson distributed a handout identifying the unemployment rates for Salt Lake and Tooele Counties. He then stated that unemployment rates are not easy to measure and are subject to substantial fluctuation. Mr. Robson continued by stating that the unemployment rates for both Salt Lake and Tooele Counties have increased over the past few years. Salt Lake County unemployment rate went from 3.0% in 2000 to 6.3% in 2002. Tooele County unemployment rate went from 5.3% in 2000 to 9.9% in 2002.

A brief discussion followed as Council members asked questions of Mr. Robson regarding the unemployment rates and the economy. Mr. Robson then noted that he is very surprised that unemployment isn't higher than it is due to the State's low rate in job growth.

Mr. Robson then identified some major industries that the Council may want to look at in terms of recruiting. The major industries include retail, financial institutions and a combination of hotels/motels and the food industry.

Due to time constraints, Mr. Robson did not present the Occupational Outlook information; however, he looks forward to presenting the information at an upcoming Council meeting.

Regional Director's Report – DWS Mid-Year Performance Presentation

Mr. Maughan gave a power point presentation to discuss the Central Region Mid-Year Performance Report. As questions came up, Council members asked questions of Mr. Maughan related to the presentation.

At the conclusion of Mr. Maughan's presentation, Ms. Conard stated that the Council will look forward to hearing more at the retreat. Council members will receive an electronic copy of the presentation upon request.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Ms. Silver stated that the Utah Issues holds a free Poverty Issues Conference every year. This year the conference will be on May 9th at the University of Utah. If anyone is interested in registering, the number to call is 521-2035.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

As there was no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.